

**James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, June 23, 1780.
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
1900-1910.**

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.1

1 From the Madison papers (1840).

Philadelphia, June 23, 1780.

Dear Sir, —The fact is confirmed that Clinton has returned to New York with part of the Southern army, and has joined Kniphausen. They are at present manoeuvring for purposes not absolutely known, but most probably in order to draw General Washington to an action, in which they suppose he might be disabled from giving the necessary co-operation to the French armament. Could they succeed in drawing him from his strong position, the result indeed ought to be exceedingly feared. He is weak in numbers beyond all suspicion, and under as great apprehension from famine as from the enemy. Unless very speedy and extensive reinforcements are received from the Eastern States, which I believe are exerting themselves, the issue of the campaign must be equally disgraceful to our councils and disgusting to our allies. Our greatest hopes of being able to feed them are founded on a patriotic scheme of the opulent merchants of this city, who have already subscribed nearly £ , and will very soon complete that sum, the immediate object of which is to procure and transport to the army rations, and three hundred hogsheads of rum. Congress, for the support of this bank, and for the security and indemnification of the subscribers, have pledged the faith of the United States, and agreed to deposit bills of

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exchange in Europe to the amount of £150,000 sterling, which are not, however, to be made use of, unless other means of discharging this debt should be inadequate.